

# **Examiners' Report**

## **June 2022**

**GCE English Language 9EN0 01**

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## Introduction

In this series, candidates demonstrated a good knowledge of the range of modes that they were expected to analyse. It appeared that, in many cases, centres had prepared candidates to have some lively discussions about context; thanks to the advance information that was made available prior to the exam. Candidates had generally been prepared to interrogate unseen texts with confidence; the most successful candidates reflected with purpose on the context of production in each of the four pieces of data. However, there were candidates who were not sufficiently prepared. Centres should take all opportunities to familiarise candidates with the layout of the exam script, the timed conditions they will encounter and also, the ability to respond to the data given. Centres should be reminded to encourage candidates to respond to questions in the appropriate section of the exam booklet and allocate their time accordingly.

There was significant variation in the candidates' ability to deal with the data in a meaningful way. Both sections invited candidates to compare the given data sets, however some responses failed to fully develop their observations of different connections. The four texts provided an interesting range of challenges for candidates, with lots of opportunities for discussion about mode and function. It was interesting to see candidates engaging with some of these ideas and offering their varied reflections. The most accomplished responses really focused on the comparative elements and found some interesting connections between the two sets. Many candidates were able to write at length about writers' intention and noticed the subtleties of multimodal communication in each section. In many responses, candidates rose to the challenge of exploring the linguistic frameworks to help structure their analytical points. In some cases, linguistic framework models were used to the detriment of candidates being able to focus on the given data, resulting in some generic statements as opposed to critical observations. There were many examples of candidates who were able to comment on a range of framework features present in all texts. However, some responses were working through features that were not present in the text, but characteristic of the form; this approach hindered them from being able to explore the data fully.

## Question 1

### Section A: Individual Variation

This section provides two 21st Century linked texts assessing candidates' understanding of how individuals convey personal and social identity. Text A was a transcript of a spoken conversation involving DJ Vixon reflecting on changing her career. Text B was a series of Instagram posts from a new mother, Daria, on her private account.

In this series, candidates were asked to compare a transcript about a DJ who had changed profession, with a series of Instagram posts from a new mother.

It was clear that those who had prepared thoroughly for the exam (in light of the advanced information) were able to make some engaging, analytical points regarding the nature of communication in social media and in spoken communication. Naturally, some responses were overly reliant on stock information about the generic functions of each mode, however, there were many examples of candidates who clearly enjoyed the opportunity to write about something they could relate to.

The title of this section is 'Individual Variation' and, as such, candidates should be reminded that the comments they make on the data should reference the ways in which the language used in both examples illustrate the personality of the users. The most successful responses were those that meaningfully reflected on the ways in which specific decisions had been taken, by the respective text producers, to illustrate a part of their identity. In the majority of responses, the exploration of identity was generally comparative, in the sense that candidates were able to identify commonalities between the speaker and writer beyond simply their age and their gender. Candidates often provided evidence to illustrate their points and the most accomplished were able to draw on relevant theories, issues and concepts to support their comments.

It was encouraging to read responses from candidates who were keen to make observations on the phonology in Text A, however, centres should be mindful when applying IPA in unseen analysis. Candidates should avoid feature spotting and, in the case of DJ Vixon's transcript, there was some misunderstanding regarding an American accent which some candidates felt she was employing. Many candidates were able to explain how her ability to communicate a relaxed, confident tone could be observed in the spoken features she was using. A few responses were able to assess the idea of constructed identity in Text B versus the more spontaneous and unplanned nature of Text A. Where candidates explored the shared use of humour, and linked this to mode, they were more successful, as they were often linking specific language features to the presentation of identity.

Some candidates spent too much time reflecting on their expectations of both forms, detailing what they hoped to see, rather than what was actually evident in the data. This resulted in lengthy introductions and sometimes, very straightforward observations. Points relating to the pronoun “I”, and how this made someone egocentric or self-centred, were common but rarely allowed candidates to elaborate in greater depth about the specific nature of identity. Some interesting points were made about the ways in which DJ Vixon's persona had been cultivated by the different professions she had held. Candidates who were able to characterise tone using specific adjectives and relevant examples were most successful. With regards to Instagram, discussions about the “taboo” nature of breast feeding and the language used to present this topic online, were interesting. Most responses were able to relate key information about the nature of linguistic codes used by private accounts. The most developed responses considered the use of language in relation to the discourse structure of the range of posts and the ways in which the online mode allowed Daria to effectively appeal to her likely narrow audience of friends or mothers alike.

More perceptive candidates were able to pick up on the frustration felt by DJ Vixon when her ambitions were dismissed, yet also recognised her resilience and determination in the face of criticism of her career change, suggesting her confident and independent nature. Many candidates noted Daria's sense of optimism and honesty in the discussion of maternal struggles, and her initial feelings of failure, allowing her to present herself as authentic and relatable to her audience.

The best responses were able to use the theoretical approaches to construct an argument about their perspective of the creation of individual identity, however there were still many lengthy explanations of theorists which were not successfully embedded. A common point of connection between both texts' producers was their age and gender. The quality of responses on this topic ranged from describing models of gender analysis to the more evaluative approach of selecting specific moments in the texts which were indicative of their gender or personality. There were some misconceptions in theoretical approaches taken with both texts; the most common was the misapplication of Grice's conversation Maxims. However, it was encouraging to note the use of theory relating to language and technology (particularly to Swales' Discourse Communities) which was applied confidently, in relation to Daria's Instagram posts. The best responses were able to interrogate the function of social media as a form that often blends features of the spoken and written modes.

There were many examples of candidates attempting a thorough reflection of linguistic framework features present in both texts. The lower levels tended to offer broad, general comments focused on lexis and phonology, often tagged on to the comment with a phrase such as “this supports”, but only in the minority of examples was this followed by an explanation of how. Candidate responses placed in the higher levels tended to explore a wider range of linguistic framework features such as syntax, pragmatics, discourse and the meaning these conveyed to the respective audiences.

Finally, <sup>text A is a spoken</sup> ~~both text producers~~ ~~spoken~~ piece of text whereas text B is a written transcript meaning they fall at opposite ends of Bibers spoken, written scale although interestingly both text producers show use of written & spoken features in both texts. DJ Vixen in text A conveys a sense that this is a spoken piece as we are able to notice features of spoken language throughout in the evidence of false starts "to do (-) to start DJ'ing" as well as repairs "She she's having..." and "I've I've been..." Although we are able to see aspects of spokenness (Biber continuum) we can also suggest that this transcript falls into the more planned

end of the 'planned - unplanned' spectrum as aforementioned, we can infer that this is either an interview or she is responding to a question ~~as a notable figure~~, even if this is an interview we can suggest that she went into this interview with a pre-prepared answer to questions about her career as although this appears 'off the cuff' she must maintain this persona she has and we can notice this through the chronological sense to her speech as she describes her experience whilst referencing the text receiver in the 2nd person personal pronoun "you know" and indeed even if this is not planned, it is likely she has spoken on this subject before as DJ'ing is evidently a key part to her personality and therefore has an idea of what she will say although we can still see aspects of spokenness in this natural speech such as in the coda (labious oral narratives) of 'so yeah' as a discourse marker signalling to her text receiver her story is over, this transcript is still full of evidence of the orality of this text.



Contrastingly, text B is a written text however where we can see text A is likely to still be planned as DJ Vixen is a notable figure & must maintain her image. It is likely Daria has put much less consideration into her texts and although we might expect written text to be more highly edited, Daria appears to lean closer to the 'unplanned' end of Bibers continuum. We are able to see she uses acronyms in 'TMI!' which is expected of a social media post, supporting John McWhorters theory of pragmatic particles as she uses this acronym casually as a '42' year old woman perhaps showing evidence of Direct Levelling (Karswin)

As although we expect teenagers to use acronyms, this use of 'online language' is filtering through to everyone as it becomes the language of social media. She shows more evidence of her text being unplanned and even showing spoken qualities in 'finally some positive house news today' as she uses ellipsis in 'finally had' of the pronouns 'I' or 'we' as well as the verb 'have' as she omits these features from the verb phrase to potentially show how she is more focused on sharing her news and excitement rather than focusing on the rules of grammar as Cameron & Pothier said 'writers of new media are freer to ignore established conventions' as <sup>written</sup> language becomes less about prestige as evident in ~~Daria's~~ Daria's lack of "correctness" in her texts and it is likely this is even subconscious.



This response scored 28 marks overall.

In this extract, it is clear how the candidate forms a critical perspective on the construction of identity. It is an example of a very accomplished analysis because it maintains clear focus on the data. The use of theory guides the candidate towards their interpretation and their consideration of the way in which both producers have crafted their language. The sense of evaluation is also clear in the way they consider mode. There is an obvious attempt to assimilate the writer's intent and the impact this has on the reader.



1 Analyse and compare how the speaker in Text A and the writer in Text B use language to convey personal and social identity.

You should refer to any relevant language frameworks and levels, as well as social, cultural and other contextual factors.

(30)

Text A and B both depict women in their 40's talking about different experiences in their life through the means of conversation (Text A) and Instagram captions (Text B). There is a function to inform in text A, about past and current experiences involved with being a DJ, likely conveyed to an audience with an interest in music and/or fans of DJ Vixon, perhaps subtly there is also a sub-function to inspire and present, intended to encourage women her age to venture and explore different pathways. Similarly, text B also conveys this sub-function, <sup>aimed towards mothers</sup> although it is potentially more foregrounded due to the ~~application to~~ likely tailored presentation of character, presenting evidence of synthetic personalisation, theorised by Fairclough. Furthermore, it could be said, however, that the primary function is personal to the text producer as the posts <sup>recount past &</sup> convey a journalistic element current events like a journal. Contextually, the ~~author~~ text producers ~~is~~ <sup>being female</sup> is likely to present ~~overlaps~~ a similar identity conveyed by their gender, although the role of being a DJ and a mother seem to be <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ more prominent identities portrayed in the texts.



This response scored 21 overall.

This extract is from the start of the essay and exemplifies a very controlled approach to the introduction. Where other responses may focus on a preformulated approach, this one relates to the specifics of the data and incorporates it assuredly.



When introducing the texts, highlight the specific features of form and mode, don't rely on stock definitions; instead explore on the data.

- 1 Analyse and compare how the speaker in Text A and the writer in Text B use language to convey personal and social identity.

You should refer to any relevant language frameworks and levels, as well as social, cultural and other contextual factors.

(30)

Both text A and text B use variation in their language to effectively communicate their social and personal identities. Text A presents herself as a bubbly, easy going person, who takes pride in her occupation and her perseverance. Text B presents herself as a mother, a caring, conscientious person and a British-Iranian citizen.

In text B Daria expresses her cultural heritage using the ~~the~~ dynamic verb 'flee' in relation to her displacement from 'Iran during the war'. The use of this dynamic verb and ~~past tense~~ adverbial phrase 'during the war' indicates her heritage and where she ~~is~~ and her family are from. Daria discusses this topic of conversation without hesitation and with a positive and caring attitude. This reflects Kramsch's theory of ethnicity where ~~as~~ people take great pride in the ethnic and cultural heritage which places their social identities at the forefront of people's identities. ~~Daria is talking about~~ This informs the audience without evoking pity for her but

instead inspiring her audience with the comparative adjective and adjective phrase 'kinder' and 'more tolerable' as she expresses her hope for society.

Her Iranian heritage isn't the only ethnic background that she portrays. She uses interjected discourse ('I am first and then the cream, obviously!') to create a synthetic personalised shared frame of reference for her British audience (Fairclough). She uses the adverb 'obviously' as a conversational interjection to further establish her use of synthetic personalisation. She also expresses her British ethnicity using the exophoric ~~reference~~ <sup>reference</sup> of 'Bake Off' which ~~is deemed~~ <sup>carries</sup> connotations of a very stereotypically British television show.

The text producer in text A also uses elements of conversationalism in her language to convey her identity. Paralinguistic features such as her laughter alongside informal colloquialisms such as 'nuts' provides the audience the impression that she has a fun and easy-going personality. She also uses clipping of the verb phrase 'going to' into 'gon' /'gɒnzəl/' when showing a more determined side [<sup>\* SEE END OF ESSAY</sup>] to her personality in the phrase 'no one's gon to get in my way'. \* This easy-going and yet determined representation of her personal identity is entertaining and engaging to an audience as it makes her seem inspirational and approachable as a person.





This response gained 26 marks.

In this extract, there is a critical examination of the creation of identity, especially in relation to Daria's ethnicity and her assimilation into British Culture. The examination of her language crafting is insightful and engaging. The use of framework features to explore pragmatics and examine the creation of subtleties in the quotations selected shows a very assured approach to critical reflection.

Although the exploration of Text A is not as strong as Text B, there is a genuine attempt to explore the connections and thoroughly examine the range of features that contribute to the impact Vixon is having on her audience.

## Question 2

### Section B: Variation Over Time

This section provides two unseen thematically linked texts from two different time periods assessing candidates' understanding of historical variation. Text C was a letter written to the British Government from a settlement in South East Asia in 1685. Text D was an article published in 2014 for the travel website *Nowhere Magazine*.

It should be noted that the title of this section is 'Variation over Time'; candidates should be reminded of the requirement to make comments on the range of linguistic features that show the developments in the English Language present in the examples. Frequent misconceptions involved candidates using theories more applicable to Section A, or indeed other papers, in order to draw meaning about the data. This lack of focus on Variation over Time, meant that less successful responses were characteristically descriptive in their nature.

It was clear that a lot of candidates may have benefitted from taking more time to read through Text C a few more times, in order to consider more ideas than simply the information it was conveying. Time spent on explaining the purpose of both texts was beneficial for those candidates who considered how they both reflected language features related to their time periods. Candidates who focused on function in greater depth outperformed those who could only offer a short history of general developments in the English Language.

Despite observing that candidates had a significant amount of historical knowledge about how language has evolved over time, there was less engagement with these ideas in the data. Some candidates only focused on the visible differences such as orthography and syntax. There was also a noticeable application of Jean Aitchinson's language myths being described in these responses. Candidates should be mindful of the ways in which they integrate contextual detail. A discriminative approach to information such as The King James Bible, Caxton's Printing Press and Lowth's Grammar book should be taken over a descriptive one. This information is only useful to candidates if they are developing their observations as a result of what can be evidenced in the data. Comments about the influence of Chaucer and Shakespeare are also only relevant if examples of words coined by the writers can be seen in the texts.



Responses that were placed higher in the levels did what the question asked of them – explored and explained how travel writing and letter writing had changed over time. Candidates, at this level, offered comments on the ways in which language was influenced, not only by the genre of the letter, but by the intended recipient and function. They analysed pertinent aspects of syntax i.e. modification, adverbials, clause structure, lexical choice and the ways in which the writers conveyed meaning to the audiences. In the best responses, language change was incorporated through the analysis of examples selected i.e. if a candidate was analysing an example such as a word that contained final , this was done after the analysis of the word on a semantic level. Less successful responses simply made the observation that the terminal was present in many words.

Some responses were insightful and offered strong analysis of the data based on advancements and changes in travel, making relevant links to technology and societal change. These were often more confident responses which really focused on the data in front of them. Those who were able to consider the more complex and implied ideas about travel and the genre of travel writing within letter form, were often more sophisticated and therefore placed higher in the levels.

Discussion of Text D in terms of genre was more successful and many responses confidently discussed the range of figurative language techniques to engage and entertain the assumed readership of travel enthusiasts. There was a clear understanding that attitudes and the approach to travel had changed over time, and most were able to support this with evidence and relevant terminology.

Candidates who structured their response using AO4, and a clear focus on field and function, were more successful as their answer was led by the data rather than by the contextual factors which weren't always relevant to the texts themselves. It was apparent that candidates understood features of diachronic variation but did not always apply this to the data. Those who had a secure grasp of linguistic terminology, and the language frameworks, were able to produce a more confident and accomplished response.

In a lot of cases, interesting points of comparison were made about the respective writers' perception of place. Many were able to comment in detail about how each piece presented the two different environments. Points about Text D were often limited by a focused discussion of the nature of travel guides and a brief history of the internet. In some cases, there was a largely irrelevant focus on the presentation of women in Text C, with many stunted comments on the presentation of Mr Fowles' widow. However, there were some engaging interpretations about the semantic choices made by each writer in relation to weather.

Both texts also include references to buildings, however while text C documents the failures and shortcomings of Western/Coloniser building ability, text D seems to be in awe at the skills of the locals at ~~build~~ constructing new buildings. Text C mentions 'the rain which hath

fallen in Soe Violent a Manner that it hath much hindered our designe,' which clearly shows the unprepared nature of the colonists. Interestingly, the inclusion of the third person verb form 'hath' clearly shows grammatical variation between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries, in that it is an archaic and obsolete ~~sp~~ inflection. The non standard capitalisation of the intensified adjective phrase 'Soe Violent' also shows evidence of a lack of standardisation, given the appearance of capital letters for something other than the start of a sentence or proper nouns. The author also references ~~these~~ defensive buildings

'bastion' and 'bulwark' this is a clear indication of what, contextually the colonists were building or preparing for, something that is reinforced with the archaic noun 'palissade'. In contrast to this, the author of text D appears in complete awe at the skills of the locals. The use of the juxtaposed premodified noun phrases 'formless

mountain' and 'smooth white rectangles' clearly attest to the skill of the builders, which is later reinforced with yet another juxtaposition this time between the 'skinny arms' and 'giant hammers'. Both of these juxtapositions, <sup>serve to</sup> reinforce the praising tone of the second text. ~~One especially interesting difference between~~ The author also seems to praise the hard-working nature of the workers, with the collocative phrases 'one after the other' and 'all day, every day' after describing the (less than ideal) working conditions, with the concrete noun 'dust.'



The candidate shows a critical perspective of the use of non-standard forms of language and uses these comments to explore a solid connection between the texts.

The use of language features to show the perspectives of both writers regarding the locals is very assured.

The selection of quotations is well chosen to examine key features of change, as well as form.

The focus on grammar is also a useful way in which the candidate is able to critically examine the construction of both texts in relation to their periods of production.



Use quotations to help show how general contextual knowledge of language development can be applied specifically to the given data.



- 2 Texts C and D describe experiences of living abroad. Analyse and compare the ways that both texts demonstrate how this type of language has changed over time.

*You should refer to any relevant language frameworks and levels, as well as social, cultural and other contextual factors.*

(30)

Both text C and text D detail recent travel events, although they have different audiences (the government and frequent travellers) and in turn purposes (to inform versus to inform and entertain). Despite this, it is clear to see how between 1685<sup>(1)</sup> and the more contemporary era of the internet (D) there has been change in the use of language, especially in terms of grammar, orthography and somewhat lexis.

Grammatically, sentence type and length (syntax) has varied greatly between 1685 and the present. Notably, in text C there is an extended complex sentence spanning eleven lines, "Soe finding... and fortifie", with only three sentences in the text overall. This highlights the frequent use of colons, semi-colons and commas in texts of this time period, however this text only featured commas. This may have been due to the complete idiosyncrasy of text C, as it was likely not even

printed, but handwritten to be sent from Indonesia to Britain. Therefore, there would be little ~~to~~ to no ~~spelling checks in the~~ review of grammar before it was sent. However, there is likely some influence of standardisation which was occurring at the time & since the writer of the letter would have been educated and wealthy to be entrusted with correspondence to the ~~goverment~~ government and afford to be on the expedition as an employer. ~~However~~ In contrast, text D uses a range of sentence types including complex, compound and simple across the entire text. The most interesting grammatical feature though is the use of elliptical sentences such as the ones beginning with "and" ~~occurring~~ and "so much so" which occur at least five times throughout the text. This could be an example of Fairclough's conversationalisation, ~~which~~ whereby sentences over time are ~~not~~ becoming more similar to speech which is reflected in the writing. This would claim that this is simple laziness as people are unwilling to use functional lexis like determiners, "the" and "a", pronouns <sup>appropriate</sup> or <sup>^</sup> conjunctions, & subordinate conjunctions can be used at the beginning of sentences, such as "also"





This response achieved 26 marks.

In this extract, there is a very well considered approach to the grammatical features of the texts.

The candidate has taken time to genuinely incorporate their knowledge and make it applicable to the data they are working with. They make very specific points about the construction of the text and use these ideas to examine how this reflects the contexts of production alongside the logical consideration of personal crafting.

The consideration of the function of ellipsis in the mode of Text D shows a clear attempt to evaluate the impact of the feature on the reader. This sharp, incisive focus on the texts demonstrates fully, the features of control at the top level.

- 2 Texts C and D describe experiences of living abroad. Analyse and compare the ways that both texts demonstrate how this type of language has changed over time.

*You should refer to any relevant language frameworks and levels, as well as social, cultural and other contextual factors.*

(30)

Whilst both Text ~~A~~<sup>C</sup> and Text ~~B~~<sup>D</sup> discuss experiences of living abroad, there is a clear shift in attitudes toward travel that is conveyed through lexical change between 1685 and modern day. Text ~~A~~<sup>C</sup> is a written letter ~~from the~~<sup>to the</sup> British Government whilst Text D is an extract from a travel website - 'Nowhere magazine'.

Immediately, it is clear to see that knowledge surrounding ~~travel~~<sup>living abroad</sup> ~~has~~<sup>has</sup> ~~shift~~<sup>shift</sup> has developed between ~~1658~~<sup>1685</sup> the Early Modern English period and now. Through the use of adverbial phrase '~~work~~ workt dayly' as well as a sustained semantic field of manual labour - repetition of verb 'work' (which is inconsistently spelt 'worke' likely as a result of nonstandardised grammar before the end of the Great Vowel shift in 1700) ~~a sense of~~  
~~a lack~~ reflects the idea that there was a

significant lack in technology and ~~to~~ knowledge surrounding travel and ~~research~~<sup>housing</sup>, which was likely due to the fact that technology didn't fully develop until 1800. The fact that settlers had to ~~construct~~ and ~~survive~~ ~~to~~ ~~construct~~ means of living in foreign lands completely opposes the modern idea of a pre-prepared casual holiday which is demonstrated in Text D. Through the use of common nouns 'window' and 'house' it is clear that, despite the mentioning of 'storm', the narrator is ~~conf~~ within a comfortable environment - opposite from the archaic text's subjects needing to 'fortify' their settlement. Furthermore, this is depicted through the use of verb 'endeavoured' in 'our people hath endeavoured to make' as well as 'noun 'cost' in 'cost a fortnights building' which again reinforce this idea of manual labour and intensive physical exertion that was partnered with the prospect of colonial colonisation which resulted in massive loss of life, evidenced through the ~~stat~~ noun 'died' in the closing statement 'Mr Fowles this day died'. ~~Adve~~ Similarly, in Text D a more critical and observational stance



is adopted when the narrator discusses the exploitation of ~~toea~~ local citizens in India - 'And the men, out there all day, every day... clank, clanking?' The use of determiners 'all' and 'every' as well as onomatopoeic lexis 'clank' depicts how, despite the travellers' lack of physical labour, indigenous people still have to work on their behalf.

In terms of minor change, the connection between life ~~is~~ abroad and weather is clearly conveyed through lexical features. Whilst in both texts weather (storms) ~~are~~ depicted as violent and ~~powerful~~ powerful - 'Soe violent a Manner' (Text C) and 'violent winds' (Text D) - it is clear to see that knowledge surrounding weather has developed due to an influx of subject specific terms in Text D - 'storm', 'lightning', 'thunder' versus the singular term 'rain' which is sustained in Text C.



This response achieved 27 marks.

The way in which this candidate addresses the nature of the question is an excellent example of critical control.

The use of the connection of living abroad to judiciously select features of language that allow them to explore the two contexts of production is excellent.

The range of linguistic features considered is confident and also exemplifies an evaluative approach to the construction of the text, allowing them to demonstrate these essential skills of the top level.



Don't forget to focus on the question, this can be a useful way to find the most relevant examples in the data.

## Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Ensure timing is appropriately allocated for each of the two sections and the answers are written in the corresponding sections of the booklet.
- Read each of the example texts a few times in order to select the most appropriate material for the question.
- Avoid using too much generic contextual information, instead apply theories and concepts meaningfully to the data.
- Ensure that responses fully engage with the section titles 'Individual Variation' and 'Variation over Time'. Try to incorporate relevant theorists to suit the angle of investigation.
- Ensure a full range of framework features are explored over all texts, select examples that allow you to illustrate the methods of production.



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